

Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of 2002 Biennial Regulatory Review -
Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules
and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202
of the Telecommunications Act of 1996,
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,
MM Docket No. 02-277, (rel. Sept. 23, 2002)

To: The Secretary, FCC Commissioners, and Chief, Media Bureau

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. If its goals is to promote competition, diversity and localism in media markets, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. These so-called "studies" are nothing more than an attempt to add phony academic gloss to the agenda of the giant corporations, which is to hijack the public airwaves and turn the entire spectrum into one giant Clear Channel. While there may indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become vastly more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is a crucial part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Contrary to some corporate lackeys in powerful positions in the FCC, our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have an open, informed discussion from a wide variety of viewpoints will be seriously compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding, and not the bad-policy consolidation ideas that can only make a few already bloated companies even less responsive to local conditions.

In addition, I fully support the FCC's plan to hold a public hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA in February 2003. I strongly encourage the Commission to hold similar hearings in all parts of the country and solicit the widest possible participation from the public. The rarified, shyster-lawyerly atmosphere of an FCC rulemaking is not an appropriate decision-making venue when questions as profound as the freedom of our media are at stake. I encourage the Commissioners (supposed guardians of the public trust) to come out and actually meet people who do not have a crass, callow financial interest in this issue, but a diverse and freedom-enhancing social interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is vital that the Commission take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to

have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you,

George Powell